



Veterans Plan

Fighting for those who fought for us

America's veterans have put so much on the line to defend our great Nation and safeguard our freedoms. As the mother of an active-duty Marine officer, I understand the sacrifices that are made by our servicemembers and their families each day. That's why one of my top priorities in Congress is to ensure every American servicemember and veteran is well-equipped and properly supported, whether they are serving actively or returning to civilian life.

Congress and the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs (VA) have an obligation to deliver for our military community. Programs for veterans must be transparent, effective, and affordable. Given the problems that have historically plagued the VA, including misspending, inconsistency in providing quality healthcare, and backlogs of claims, my focus is on making sure the VA is reformed to effectively meet its mission set and serve our veterans.

My Plan to Deliver for America's Veterans focuses on four core pillars: ensuring VA Transparency and Accountability, Expanding Access to Quality Healthcare, Supporting the Transition to Civilian Life, and Honoring the Sacrifice of Those Who Served. I encourage you to read more about each of these initiatives below and I look forward to your feedback.

Ensuring VA Transparency and Accountability

- **Supported H.R. 2704, the Improving VA Accountability to Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Act of 2021:** This legislation will make significant strides in accountability at the VA to ensure our country's heroes are not subjected to the evils of sexual harassment. In particular, the bill requires the VA to report sexual harassment allegations and update its policies and training. This legislation passed the House of Representatives on May 18, 2021 with strong bipartisan support.
- **Supported H.R. 2911, the VA Transparency and Trust Act:** This bill will ensure the VA is effectively handling all funds it has received as part of its COVID-19 response efforts. The VA has received tens of billions of dollars in funding from Congress to respond to COVID, and this legislation will provide full accountability over those funds. This bill passed the House of Representatives on May 17, 2021 with bipartisan support.

Expanding Access to Quality Healthcare

- **Cosponsored H.R. 2127, the Toxic Exposure in the American Military Act:** This legislation will improve VA healthcare benefits for veterans who were exposed to toxic materials through burn pits during their service. Open burn pits were responsible for conditions affecting the respiratory and cardiovascular systems, eyes, skin, and the gastrointestinal tract. Every veteran suffering from as a result of such exposure deserves

the best care available. Relatedly, I also have cosponsored **H.R. 2436**, which recognizes that veterans were subjected to toxic exposure through burn pits.

- **Supported H.R. 2441, the Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act:** This bill will expand the VA's capacity to assist veterans experiencing mental health illnesses. It will require the VA to maintain new centers of the rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (RANGE) Program. It also will initiate a study to make certain the VA has sufficient resources to serve mental health care needs of veterans in rural areas. This bill passed the House of Representatives on May 18, 2021 with bipartisan support.

Supporting the Transition to Civilian Life

- **Cosponsored H.R. 1448, the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act:** 30% of Vietnam veterans and 11-20% of veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at some point in their lifetimes. This bipartisan legislation will allow the VA to provide service dogs to veterans with mobile illnesses and create a program to assess its effectiveness. Research from Purdue University has shown that service dogs for PTSD can help restore feelings of confidence, safety, and independence in veterans' daily lives. This legislation was passed by the House of Representatives with bipartisan support on May 12, 2021.
- **Cosponsored H.R. 1476, the Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Program Act:** This legislation will create a national program that connects veterans suffering from PTSD or a traumatic brain injury (TBI) with other veterans suffering under similar circumstances. Connecting veterans with their peers allows them to confide in someone they can trust in addition to trained VA civilian staff.
- **Cosponsored H.R. 2391, the Veterans Fellowship Act:** This bill will create short-term fellowships for veterans and provide them an opportunity to be employed on a long-term basis after completion. This will help veterans reacclimate to civilian life and find meaningful careers following their service in a range of roles in the Armed Forces.

Honoring the Sacrifice of Those Who Served

- **Introduced the Remembering Our Local Heroes Act:** This bill will honor our fallen or disabled heroes by providing grants to local governments to support memorials to veterans of the United States Armed Forces, as well as law enforcement officers and firefighters. We cannot forget our history and the sacrifice of our local heroes; we owe it to their memory to erect these memorials or to keep these local landmarks maintained.
- **Cosponsored H.R. 1115, the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act:** This bipartisan legislation will establish a memorial for the Global War on Terrorism at a location near the National Mall in Washington, D.C. We must never forget those servicemembers who made great sacrifices to protect our homeland in the wake of the most devastating terrorist attack in our nation's history.

Your views are always important to me. Please write to me on my website or call my office at 202-225-3665 with feedback, questions, or concerns.